

PERCEPTION OF POULTRY FARMERS REGARDING EXTENSION SERVICES PROVIDED BY MUKHTAR FEEDS SAMUNDARI

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Poultry is one of the cheapest sources of protein for developing countries, especially Pakistan. But it is not enough to meet the requirement of the people due to various problems. There are many public as well as private sectors organizations that are providing different poultry extension facilities to the poultry farmers to meet the current situation and mitigate the challenges regarding the production. The current study is planned to assess the perception of poultry farmers regarding extension services provided by Mukhtar Feeds (MFs) Samundari. All the registered poultry farmers of MFs Tehsil Samundari were considered as a population of the study and sample size of 152 registered farmers were selected randomly. Results indicated that 25% of the respondents were highly satisfied with the services provided by MFs; however, 28.9% of the respondents had a very high satisfaction level. It is also indicated that 40.79% of the respondents selected MFs because of its low price feeds and about one fifth (23.68%) of the respondents were visiting MFs three times a week for purchasing poultry feed. It is suggested that public sector extension agencies should treat private sector see them as partners and offer them specific training on their areas of strength for better extension service delivery to promote poultry farming in Pakistan.

Keywords: poultry farming, human nutrition, protein source, poultry feed, extension services, profitability.

INTRODUCTION

The poultry sector plays a very important role in economic growth in Pakistan. The poultry sector is one of the basic assets of the agriculture department (Idrees *et al.*, 2007). In the past, the poultry sector has played a fundamental role in the lives of rural people to meet their food security needs by mainly requiring protein in the form of eggs and meat (Islam, 2003). The poultry area has experienced excellent growth in recent years and has become a source of employment and trade for more than 1.5 million people (GOP, 2014). In Pakistan, poultry production is one of the most efficient and best-organized sectors, contributing 26.8, 5.76 and 1.26% to total meat production, the agricultural sector and the total gross development output. The poultry sector has experienced strong growth in recent years and has been created as a source of employment for more than 1.6 million people (GOP, 2014). Improving the poultry sector is an essential element of economic development (Bhatti, 2011). The private sector plays an extremely compelling role in improving these facilities, but the government is responsible for implementing policies. The reaction of breeders to respect for new poultry technologies largely depends on the economic stimuli of this sector. Both small and large farmers react quickly and positively to the attractive prices of their products by effectively expanding. However, they cannot respond

appropriately and quickly if they do not understand the latest technological environments in which they work (Rehman *et al.*, 2019). Poultry farmers face a number of challenges such as epidemics and fluctuations in retail prices. Poultry farmers have no expertise in the quality and quantity of their production (Potdar, 2019). Despite its ups and downs, the Pakistani industry still recorded growth of 126% in the total number of birds produced, 125% in total meat production and 72% in the total number of eggs produced between 2000 and 2010 (GOP, 2013). A balanced diet is essential for people's health, vitality and productivity. Proteins play an important role in the formation of a balanced human diet. There are two main sources of protein: i. animals and plants (Achoja *et al.*, 2005; Maqbool, 2012). Human nutrition in Pakistan is deficient in protein, as around 66% of Pakistanis are protein deficient (Maqbool, 2012).

The marketing problem is one of the obstacles to the introduction of poultry technology and products (Alemu *et al.*, 2006). Egg and poultry meat are inexpensive sources of protein, especially across different socio-economic groups in developing countries (Amusat *et al.*, 2019). Poultry meat had increased to 25% of the market share whereas mutton and beef had reduced to 55% and 20%, respectively (GOP, 2013). There are many private sectors which are playing a significant role to promote the poultry sector in Pakistan. Mukhtar Feeds is one of the important industries related to poultry following

its vision to contribute positively through research and innovation. It started in 2010 is now one of the top companies in the field of dairy and poultry feed on the basis of consistent delivery of quality and services across Pakistan. Feed processed on the computerized plants is the ultimate source of the bright future of farmers and brings success/well-being of Pakistan. They are providing premium quality products made under the strict supervision of experienced professional lists to guarantee the great quality of each product. Different feeds are very famous e.g. Meat Plus: 26+, Dairy Gold Plus: 24, Broiler Starter Special Crumbs: 14s, Calf Starter: 20. The role of the extension services is very important to enhance the production of poultry through disseminating proper awareness s regarding proper management (Gowda, 2001). Therefore, this study was designed to understand the perception of the farmers regarding the different extension services provided by the Mukhtar Feeds.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Mukhtar Feeds (MFs) Samundari was selected for the respective research. Faisalabad district consists of six tehsils i.e. Jaranwala, Samundari, Faisalabad city, Faisalabad Saddar, Chak Jhumra and Tandlianwala; however, tehsil Samundari was selected conveniently. The population of the study was 250 poultry farmers which were registered with MFs. Registered poultry farmers of Mukhtar Feeds were considered as targeted population of the study. The sample size was 152, which was obtained by using survey software method available online (www.surveysystem.com) with confidence level 95% and confidence interval of 5%. The data were collected through semi structured interview schedule (Denscombe, 2014). Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis of the data and computed simple percentage, mean and standard deviations were counted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of the respondents is given in Table 1 according to monthly income of the respondents. Five categories were made to find out the monthly income of the respondents. It depicts that few (26.97%) of the respondents were earning Rs. 25000 per month. As, 23.03% of the respondents were earning Rs. 50,000 per month. Around one third (28.29%) of the respondents were earning Rs. 75000 per month and 21.71% of the respondents of this study were earning Rs. 100,000 per month. It is clear that majority of the registered growers were having income 75 thousand per month which indicates that they are getting reasonable amount after a month from the source of income.

Table 2 indicates that 25% of the respondents were highly satisfied by the services provided for their poultry by MFs. Around one fourth (30.92%) of the respondents were highly satisfied. Whereas 21.05% of the respondents were satisfied

to medium level for services provided by MFs. 13.82% of the respondents were less satisfied by MFs services and 9.21% of the respondents had satisfaction very low. It is revealed from data that the majority of the registered growers were satisfied with the services of MFs from medium to very high level. It clearly indicates the high quality poultry service provided by the feed industry. Ronaldo (2020) suggested that poultry can improve business performance through proper strategies.

Table 1. Respondents monthly income earned from the poultry business.

Monthly income (Rs./month)	Frequency	Percent
25,000	41	26.97
50,000	35	23.03
75,000	43	28.29
100,000	33	21.71
Total	152	100.0

Table 2. Response of the respondents regarding level of satisfaction with extension services provided by Mukhtar Feeds.

Level of satisfaction	Frequency	Percent
Very High	38	25.00
High	47	30.92
Medium	32	21.05
Low	21	13.82
Very Low	14	9.21
Total	152	100.00

The frequency and percentage distribution about the choice of the respondents regarding the selection of MFs depicts that 40.79% of the respondents selected MFs because of its low prices feeds (Table 3). While, 30.92% of the respondents chose MFs because of friendly staff and 28.29% of the respondents chose MFs due to easy access towards the feed mill. Gowda (2001) indicated that role of the extension services is very important to enhance the production of poultry through disseminating proper awareness s regarding proper management

Table 3. Response of the respondents regarding major reason of choosing Mukhtar Feeds.

Major reason of choosing MFs	Frequency	Percent
Low cost	62	40.79
Friendly staff	47	30.92
Easily access	43	28.29
Total	152	100.00

Table 4 shows distribution about the frequent visit to MFs by the respondents. It reveals that 18.42% of the respondents were visiting to MFs on daily basis. About one fifth (23.68%) of the respondents were visiting to MFs three times in a week for purchasing feed. Less than one fifth (17.76%) of the respondents were visiting to MFs twice a week. Around 20%

of the respondents were visiting to MFs once in a week for different purposes related to their poultry. On the other hand, 13.82% of the respondents were visiting to MFs fortnightly. A few (5.92%) of the respondents were visiting to MFs once in a month. It is clear from the data given in the table 4 that majority of the registered growers are visiting to MFs with a reasonable frequency. They are visiting the industry at least once in a week which indicates their high level of interest in extension services provided by MF.

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents regarding the frequency of visit to Mukhtar Feeds.

Visit to MFs	Frequency	Percent
Daily	28	18.42
Three times in a week	36	23.68
Twice a week	27	17.76
Once a week	31	20.39
Once in fortnight	21	13.82
Once a month	9	5.92
Total	152	100.00

The frequency and percentage wise distribution of the respondents regarding the purchase of feed from MFs presented in Table 5 indicates that 26.97% of the respondents were purchasing 10 kg feed from MFs for their poultry. Whereas, 21.71% of the respondents were purchasing 11 to 20 kg feed from MFs. Whereas 19.74% of the respondents were purchasing 21 to 30 kg feed from MFs and 20.39% of the respondents were purchasing 31 to 40 kg feed from MFs. Whereas, 11.18% of the respondents were purchasing more than 40 kg feed from MFs for their poultry.

Table 5. Quantity of feed purchased by registered poultry farmers from MFs.

Feed purchased (Kg)	Frequency	Percent
10	41	26.97
11-20	33	21.71
21-30	30	19.74
31-40	31	20.39
>40	17	11.18
Total	152	100.00

Table 6 shows satisfaction level of the respondent's according to perception about the services of MFs. For vaccination

variable, the respondents showed very high satisfaction level with a percentage of 28.9%. Similarly, perception of the respondents for the bird nutrition was high (22.3%). The perception regarding health care was at level 4 (27.6%).

The hurdles in the adoption of advanced technologies are reported in Table 7. Lack of education was one of the variables of hurdles in the adoption of advanced technologies. Most of the respondents were agreed that lack of education is main hurdle in the adoption of advanced technologies. Most of the respondents (59.8%) agreed with the statement asked that the lack of financial condition is another hurdle in the adoption of advanced technologies for their poultry production. Lack of technical skills for development in this sector is also existed. Majority (68.4%) of the respondents were of the view that the lack of interest is the main hurdle in the adoption of advanced technologies. The lack of interest may be due to many reasons and one of the leading reasons is taken as financial constraints. The lack of interest is also leading towards the indication of behavior of the individual who are not at all showing any concern and are not ready to adopt latest advancement because of their conservative behavior as found among majority (64.4%) of the respondents. This specific attitude of the respondents is given the name 'stereotype' as visible in Table 7. A large majority (61.8%) of the respondents pointed limitation in adoption of latest technology a hindrance for on-farm practice. The poultry farmers were also facing problems in availability of vaccination in the specific area (Table 7).

Lindhahl *et al.* (2019) revealed that Poultry farming is important to developing countries, but poultry production is affected due to different diseases. In this regard, proper vaccination against diseases can improve the production. The respondents also reported in a majority (52%) that the feed they are buying from open market is not of good quality and resultantly they settle on old and conventional methods of farming. As contaminated and low quality seed is putting their poultry flock under a great economic risk and more investment on latest methods can bring more loss to their economics. In addition, the related cost of production is also very high, so they are unable to adopt or experiment any new technique on their farms. The increased supplement cost of production is perceived to be a concern by majority (59.2%) of the respondents.

Table 6. Distribution of the respondents regarding wish level of continuing poultry services

Poultry services	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Vaccination	32	21.1	28	17.8	27	17.1	21	13.8	44	28.9
Bird nutrition	28	18.4	32	21.0	30	19.7	28	18.4	34	22.3
Bird health & care	23	15.1	26	17.1	30	19.7	42	27.6	31	20.3
Any other	34	22.3	23	18.4	29	19.0	38	25	28	18.4

Scale: 1 = Very Low, 2 = Low, 3 = Medium, 4 = High, 5 = Very High

Table 7. Distribution of the respondents regarding factors hindering adoption of management practices by the registered growers.

Hurdles in adoption	Yes		No		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Lack of education	92	60.5	60	39.47	100	152
Lack of finance	91	59.8	61	40.13	100	152
Lack of technical skills	84	55.2	68	44.74	100	152
Lack of interest	104	68.4	48	31.58	100	152
Stereotype	98	64.4	54	35.53	100	152
Limitation in technology	94	61.8	58	38.16	100	152
Lack of vaccination facilities	86	56.5	66	43.42	100	152
Feed adulteration	80	52.0	72	47.37	100	152
Increased supplementary cost	90	59.2	62	40.79	100	152

Conclusion: The current study concludes that poultry farmers perceive extension agents as their major sources of information in the form of public and private extension services. Findings showed that farmers' perceptions of extension services were favorable. To enhance and sustain poultry farming, public-private extension agencies should work as partners and offer farmers specific training on their areas of strength in extension service delivery. Public-funded extension agencies should also plan and facilitate workshops/seminars to bring farmers and input providers on a forum whereby knowledge exchange can occur. Thus, it is recommended that extension service delivery should cover more areas of assistance so that farmers can derive maximum benefits as this will improve poultry production in the country.

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